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ABSTRACT

Any decisions regarding the language of instruction will have long-term effects on the child's life both during and after his school years. Unfortunately, language is only one facet of the total problem. In any discussion of education involving people who are culturally and linguistically different, various factors come into play, factors which enjoy an interlocking type of relationship rendering isolation of a single element difficult. These include language, community, socioeconomic status, as well as parental and community attitudes to education. To some extent it is necessary to deal with these factors in order, ultimately, to be able to make intelligent, informed decisions about language policy in the schools of Northern Alberta. This study reviewed the literature pertaining to the question of whether to begin instruction of elementary school children in English using an English as a second language program or to use the Native language for instruction initially, with English gradually introduced. Topics covered are: place of language in education, factors affecting the choice of language for use in the school, bilingual education models, opinion regarding the language of instruction, factors affecting the bilingual child's educatica progress, language problems and the school, and language policy and the reading process. It would appear that there is greater long term advantage in beginning the school program in the child's dominant language. (Author/NQ)

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LANGUAGE POLICY AND INDIAN EDUCATION

NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT GROUP
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LANGUAGE POLICY AND INDIAN EDUCATION

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Prepared For:

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INTRODUCTION

It is the purpose of the present study to "review and report on literature pertaining to the question of whether it is best to begin instruction of elementary school children in English using an ESL method or to use the Native language for instruction initially, with English being gradually introduced. (Contract)"

The central position of language in the educational process is so widely accepted in North America that it may be considered as a 'given.' The result of this position is that any decisions regarding the language of instruction will have long-term effects on the child's life both during and after his school years. Unfortunately, language is only one facet of the total problem. In any discussion of education involving people who are culturally and linguistically very different, the greatest variety of factors come into play, factors which enjoy an interlocking type of relationship rendering isolation of a single element difficult. These factors include language, community, socio-economic status, as well as parental and community attitudes to education. To some extent it will be necessary to deal with all of them in order, ultimately, to be able to make intelligent, informed decisions about language policy in the schools of Northern Alberta.

Chapter Two THE PLACE OF LANGUAGE IN EDUCATION

The importance of any decision related to language and the school is underlined by Hawthorn who states in his comprehensive study of the Indians of Canada (1967: 36) that:

> Language is an integral part of any culture, in the anthropological sense of the word. Moreover, according to linguists, the structure of a language determines the mental categories and thought processes of those who have inherited this language from their parents. No one will dispute the fact that the spoken and written word is an essential instrument in the process of transmitting and absorbing knowledge. In the field of education, there is a direct relationship between mastery of the language and success in learning. For all these reasons, the question of language of instruction in schools attended by Indians is thus of capital importance.

At first glance, then, the decision as to choice of language of instruction appears to be an easy one based on simple logic. In this feeling, the literature would seem to bear me out. As early as 1946, T.J. Haarhoff, in his introduction to E.G. Malherbe's The Bilingual School, states that, "There is general agreement all over the educational world that the child should begin his education in his mother tongue or . . . the language that he most easily understands. (cited in Zintz et al, 1971: 40)."

A few years later, a gathering of the world's experts on vernacular education held in Paris in November 1951 under the auspices of UNESCO concluded in their report,

> On educational grounds we recommend that the use of the mother tongue be extended to as late a stage in education as possible. In particular, pupils should begin their schooling through the medium of the mother tongue, because they understand it best and because to begin their school life in the mother tongue will make the break between home and school as small as possible. (UNESCO, 1953: 47).

More recently, in our own country, the House of Commons Standing Committee on Indian Affairs and Northern Development (1971) recommended :

> That the language of instruction at the pre-school level and up to the first or second year of primary school should be in the language of the local Indian or Eskimo community . . . .

Such a policy, of course, was to be subject to the wishes of the native community.*

This policy has already been implemented in the Northwest Territories. (McPherson, 1974: 221). A Territories official stated at the Northern Cross-Cultural Education Symposium held in Fairbanks, Alaska in November, 1973, that:

> We believe that the basis of learning is communication - in all its many forms - and that when language is the communication form employed, it MUST be the language of the learner. Therefore, we have set down as a policy of our educational system in the N.W.T., that in the first three years of school, a child shall be taught in his native language.

The reasons offered earlier from Hawthorne have been spelled out in greater detail by others. The experts in attendance at the UNESCO conference mentioned earlier clearly had the child's interests in mind when they offered the following reasons for the use of the vernacular in the early years of schooling:

> We consider that the shock which the young child undergoes in passing from his home to his school life is so great that everything possible should be done to soften it, particularly where modern methods of infant teaching have not yet penetrated to the school. He passes from being one of a few children under his mother's eye to being one of a large group under a teacher. Instead of running about and playing and shouting, he is usually expected to sit still and be quiet, to concentrate, to do what he is told instead of what he wants to do, to listen and learn and answer questions. New information and ideas are presented to him as fast as he can possibly absorb them, and he is expected to show evidence that he has absorbed them. Almost everything is different from home and it is not surprising that many children find difficulty in adjusting themselves to their new surroundings. If the language in which all these bewildering new communications are made is also different from the

---

* This recommendation was subsequently endorsed in principle by the National Indian Brotherhood at a meeting held in Yellowknife in May 1972. This position is given further support in a brief prepared in the United States for the Bureau of Indian Affairs by the Center for Applied Linguistics. (Modiano, 1973:4) See Appendix I.

> mother tongue, the burden on the child is correspondingly increased.

Another aspect of the use of the mother tongue, its role in cognitive development, is stressed by Willink (1973: 183) who compares language to a tool for learning. Obviously, the tool must be manufactured before it can be used with any profit, a process which takes a considerable amount of time. In the meantime,

> . . . language development, and particularly mother tongue development where the mother tongue is the child's dominant language when he comes to school, is extremely important for thought development, and thought development is what education is about. Once the child has better learned how to think, and thereby how to learn, he is better equipped to learn anything that he may need to learn, including the second language, English.

Apart from the cognitive aspects mentioned by Willink, what happens to the child if the school does not teach him in his own language? Zintz (1971: 42) feels that the child is probably justly proud of his language, since it expresses his thoughts and is the language used by the people in his extended family from whom he derives support as a person. However, " If the school teaches that English is the only acceptable language there and that use of another language even during free play on the playground will be punished, the child can only conclude that his school feels that his language is inferior to the one that must be used all the time during the school day." The problems of alienation which will occur as a result of this are obvious.

Finally, apart from factors which directly affect the child, the use of the tribal language should improve school-community relationships, relationships which are openly admitted to be in considerable need of improvement. In the 1953 UNESCO report already referred to (UNESCO, 1953: 47) the nature of such improvement was discussed:

> The use of the mother tongue will promote better understanding between the home and the school when the child is taught in the language of the home. What he learns can easily be expressed or applied in the home. Moreover, the parents will be in a better position to understand the problems of the school and in some measure to help the school in the education of the child.

From this and the earlier comments it would seem obvious that the easiest, and apparently the best solution would be to use the child's maternal language in school. Yet the problem is not that simple; the nature of the language itself and its use in the community will enter into the decision as to what language to use in school. This is the problem which will be discussed in the following chapter.

Chapter Three FACTORS AFFECTING THE CHOICE OF LANGUAGE FOR USE IN THE SCHOOL

Among other factors, any decision to use the child's ancestral language as the vehicle of instruction must take into account the following considerations:

a) The viability or 'health' of the language itself.
b) Patterns of language use in the community involved.
c) Attitudes toward the language among parents and pupils.
d) Pupil competence in the language.
e) Availability of teachers and teaching materials for the language situation in the classroom.

The Viability or 'Health' of the Language Itself

Wick Miller (cited in Slager and Madsen, 1972: 1) has provided a useful scale for assessing the vitality of any language at a given point in time. Using Shoshoni as an example, he suggests that the vitality of a language must be taken into account before any decisions are made as to its use in the educational situation. Miller feels that vitality may be represented as a continuum with four principal stages - 1) flourishing, 2) obsolescing, 3) obsolete, 4) dead. He describes each of these stages as follows:

Flourishing

To be regarded as 'flourishing' the language must still be in daily use on an almost exclusive basis in the community. In such a community English is a second language, since the children entering the school know little or no English, and the adults use it only occasionally. This situation is most characteristic of areas that are remote from White centers of habitation.

Obsolescing

As an example of this stage Miller offers Shoshoni. The language is still used for social interaction in the community, but only in

restricted situations. "Not all (and in some cases none) of the children still learn the language. And if it is being learned, normally English is also being learned at the same time. Thus in communities with an obsolescing language, English cannot be regarded as a second language. Young children are in fact learning both languages at the same time. (ibid.)"

Obsolete

"An obsolete language is known (better, remembered) by some of the adults in the community, but it is rarely used . . . . (ibid.)" As Miller comments, technically the language is still living, but sociologically it is dead.

Dead

This situation applies when there are no more living speakers of the language, even though tapes and written descriptions may still be available.

The situation in Northern Alberta as it pertains to Cree, to take an example, is probably more typical of the first two situations. If we look at two communities where Cree is still spoken, in the one it may be a flourishing language, since the remoteness of the area preserves the community from contact with English. In the other locality, English may be beginning to make heavy inroads, and Cree is in the process of becoming an obsolescing language as a result.

In the case of the community where Cree is a flourishing language there is no problem about using it as the language of instruction. Where it is an obsolescing language, however, serious consideration must be given to developing English right from the beginning, and teaching Cree as a second language. Miller feels that this last approach will still produce important results, since by contrasting Cree (Miller uses Shoshoni as his example) and English, the child would gain important insights about language in general. At the same time, such a study

would make it clear to him that the language which his relatives use is a very complex one and not the primitive one that he may come to think it is after prolonged exposure to a White school.

It would seem then that the sociolinguistic situation in the specific community is going to have a lot to say about the nature of the language program in the school.* In the final analysis, however, it is the home that is going to determine whether or not the native language is maintained. While many Indian communities and Indian groups publicly demand the teaching and use of the Native language in the school, Spolsky and Holm (1971: 61) point out that these same parents often speak English to their children within the four walls of their home. In fairness, this may simply represent the dominant situation of English in the community. However, I must stress once more the very real need for a realistic assessment of the linguistic situation in a given community, since "Home language decisions are more crucial than publicly-expressed opinions. (ibid.)" and more accurately reflect the deep-down wishes of the parents.

How do Indian parents and children view the tribal language? Harkins et al. in a large survey involving 149 parents in the Menominee nation found the following attitudes (1973: 41):

> Thirty-five percent (52) of the respondents considered the Menominee language useless. They did not want their children to learn the language in school and suggested no alternative environments in which knowledge of the Menominee language

*An excellent schema for describing the linguistic situation in different communities has been developed by Mackey and is included as Appendix 2. His description is essentially a descriptive and static one.

> could be acquired. Parents based their perception on the uselessness of the Menominee language (n=22), lack of qualified teachers (n=19), and difficulty of the language (n=11).
>
> Some parents (21%) expressed indifferent or ambivalent attitudes about the value of the Menominee language. Their opinions varied from uncertainty about whether the language was important, should be taught at school, or anywhere; to labelling Menominee useless, but suggesting that opportunities (in and outside school) be available for children who wanted to learn Menominee.
>
> Thirty-eight percent (57) of the respondents considered the Menominee language as a very important and meaningful aspect of culture. They expressed strong desires for their children to become proficient speakers and hoped opportunities for learning Menominee could be created. Of the respondents who highly valued Menominee, eighty-five percent (48) wanted school curricula to include the language, and fifteen percent felt 'home' or other settings were more appropriate.

The contrast with the opinions expressed by the children of the tribe is most interesting.

> Fifty-seven percent of Menominee children [interviewed] could neither speak nor understand their tribal language. Thirty-eight percent (33) indicated varying levels of language proficiency; twenty-three percent understood and spoke some Menominee words; nine percent could follow a conversation and speak poorly; two percent understood Menominee well and could converse with little difficulty. None of the children reported perfect fluency in their native language . . . .
>
> Menominee children expressed positive attitudes toward their native language. One fourth (22) indicated why Menominee was important to them and seemed especially anxious to learn the language. (pp.59-60).

Obviously such information will vary from tribe to tribe and even from community to community within a given tribe. An excellent demonstration of this is provided by Coombs (1971:13). He cites two separate studies carried out by Selinger (1968) and Bass (1969), in other words, studies roughly contemporary with the Menominee studies just mentioned and the Cree study to which I shall refer in a minute.

According to Coombs,

> Six hundred seventy-one Indian high school graduates, 287 from six northwestern and north-central states and 384 from six southwestern states were asked whether they thought it was important to Indian students to be able to speak their native Indian language. About 85 percent of the southwesterners thought it was important, with the rest thinking it was not or having no opinion . . . . Of the students from the northwest, about one-third thought learning an Indian language was of no importance. Of the remainder who did, more than half of them valued it mainly as a means of communication with the older generation or getting a job.

In his study in Saskatchewan, Carriere (1966: 40) found that among Indian parents fourteen per cent never used the language, twenty per cent used it sometimes, 17.5 per cent used it half the time, 16.5 per cent used it usually, and thirty-two per cent used it always. It would appear from these figures, then, that there is support for the tribal language, albeit a support which varies in intensity from region to region and from age group to age group.

While many parents may express no real desire to have their child study the ancestral language even although they may come to school with a reasonable amount of competence in it, the child's lack of competence in English may make it necessary to use the tribal language in the early stages. The need for this is pointed out in a study by Spolsky and Holm carried out in 1970 (1971:62) in which they attempted to assess the English competence of Navajo children. They found that 73% of the six-year-olds studied did not possess enough English to do the work of Grade One in that language. From this it would appear that, whatever the feelings of the parents may be initially, it will be necessary to convince them of the necessity of employing the tribal language in the beginning. In situations where the child is fluent in neither language, some sort of remedial or developmental program will be necessary in one language or the other prior to his entry into Grade One.

This last point raises a rather interescing problem. Many writers have raised the possibility that there are, in fact, children who come to school fluent in neither language. Among these is Zimmerman (1974) who suggests, although his findings may be based on faulty procedures, that teachers should not assume that because a child has no fluency in English on arrival in Grade One that he is totally fluent in his own language. Zimmerman's point of view is supported by Ulibarri (1968:230):

> The fact that parents of a given sociocultural background often are more fluent in their native language than in English presents some confusion to educators. They tend to think that the children are also more proficient in their native dialect than in English. This is not necessarily the case. When one examines the language proficiency of children of minority groups to whom English supposedly is a second language, proficiency in their native language is generally lower than in English even though their development in either language may be severely retarded.

In all fairness, Ulibarri is speaking about the Spanish-speaking child. Moreover, studies of this nature may be somewhat defective in the methods used to elicit language samples from the subjects since a secure relationship with the evaluator on the part of the child may be a necessary pre-requisite to obtaining accurate results.*

A final matter which must be raised in any discussion of the use of the ancestral language in the educative process is the problem of teacher availability and material supply. Ideally, the teacher in any

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*In this connection an article by Mickelson and Galloway (1972: 27-28) may reveal a promising technique for eliciting samples of speech from shy children of a different culture. The authors had Indian children on Vancouver Island talk about the paintings which the children had made over a period of several weeks in a pre-school class. Over the weeks, the utterances grew in complexity at a rather impressive rate.

given classroom should be fluent in the language of the pupils with whom he or she is working. However, as the report of the Indian tribes of Manitoba points out (1971:108) this situation seldom obtains in the schools administered by the Education Division of the Department of Indian Affairs. There are few White teachers who possess this kind of fluency, and the training of suitably-prepared Indian teachers who do speak the language will take some time. What are the interim solutions?

The most common solution in North America today seems to be the provision of Indian aides who speak the language of the children. Ledgerwood (1972:96) suggests that the presence of such a person in the classroom would provide a model of a person with whom the Indian child might more readily identify. Troike (1974:3) is somewhat less optimistic about this outcome, observing that:

> . . . if only the aides speak the native languages, the image of its second-rate status will be reinforced. If truly bilingual teachers are demanded, or if native speakers are certified on the basis of their linguistic knowledge, other problems may arise. Ecuador may be ahead of us in requiring training in Quechua for teachers in the primary grades.

Troike goes on to suggest that even native speakers may not have the vocabulary necessary to discuss certain concepts necessary in the early grades, especially if they themselves went through a different type of education. A necessary part of every program of teacher education for teaching in the tribal language may be a component which has as its main thrust the development of the teacher's vocabulary.

Chapter Four MODELS OF BILINGUAL EDUCATION

With the various factors relating to the language itself spelled out, we are now in a position to consider the various linguistic options open to us. Kjolseth (1973:5) suggests that all programs in bilingual education may be placed at some point on a continuum between the two extremes which he calls the 'Assimilative Model' and the 'Pluralistic Model.' (Other authors use different names to apply to roughly the same concepts). In an Assimilative, or Transfer Model, regardless of the language in which the child begins his education, the ultimate goal is assimilation into the English-speaking White society. In a Pluralistic Model, on the other hand, the emphasis is placed on the development and maintenance of both the child's maternal language and of English.

Fishman and Lovas (1970: 215-22) indicate two of the intermediate possibilities when they talk about 'Monoliterate Bilingualism' and 'Partial Bilingualism.' (Transitional Bilingualism in their terms refers to the Assimilative Model and Full Bilingualism refers to the Pluralistic Model). Monoliterate Bilingualism programs aim at the development of the oral skills in both languages, but at literacy in only one of them. The inevitable result, of course, is likely to be assimilation given the emphasis on the written word in our society. Partial Bilingualism programs attempt to foster oral and written skills in both languages and so are closer to the Pluralistic Model, the difference being that literacy in the tribal language is restricted to reading about the culture of the tribe.

One further distinction which should probably be made involves the situation known as 'Diglossia.' This is defined by Kjolseth (1973: 4) as, " . . . a society wherein two or more language varieties are normatively employed, each for separate, complementary functions or domains." He goes on to suggest that:

> Diglossia is therefore a multilingual 'opportunity structure' which sustains bilingualism in individuals who, as they move from a social context dominated by one language to another dominated by norms of appropriateness for a second language

> This implies,then, first, that it is not enough that two languages are used in the classroom. If merely usage were the criterion, it could be said that bilingual education has been a fact on the Navajo Reservation ever since the first school opened, as the students use Navajo, and continue to use it among themselves for years, even after they have learned some English.
>
> Second, it means that it is not enough either that one language, English, is taught as such, and that it is also used to teach other school subjects (as far as this is possible), while the other language, Navajo, is used for explanatory purposes. In this sense today's Bureau of Indian Affairs schools could be said to use bilingual education in many classrooms.
>
> Third, - and this point is made here with emphasis - it is not enough when one language, English, is taught as such, and also used to teach - not merely explain - the so-called 'content' subjects and mathematics . . . .
>
> In order to be attractive to the educator - at least to this educator - bilingual education should mean that both languages are taught, are 'developed' in educational jargon, to the same extent that we teach English to our Anglo children, that the French teach French to their French-speaking children, that the Germans teach German to their German-speaking children . . . .

So far we have talked about the rationale for a bilingual program. But a rationale is meaningless without some idea of the goals of such a program. Perhaps this may be an appropriate point at which to take a look at the goals which the staff of a particular school have drawn up as part of the process of implementation. The school in question, located at Grants, New Mexico, is an integrated one attended by Anglo-, Spanish-American, and Indian children. Valencia (1972: 5-6) lists their goals as follows:

1. To help students learn communicative skills in their native and second language.
2. To help students become proficient in two languages which will, in turn, facilitate their educational development and academic/ vocational aspirations.
3. To help students learn subject matter concepts in two languages: particularly in social science, science, mathematics, and the arts.

4. To help students maintain a positive self-concept by studying their native cultural heritage (history and cultural aspect).

5. To help students recognize the advantages of living in a multicultural environment.

6. To help students develop favorable perceptions and attitudes toward the characteristics of other cultures, particularly those found among children in the school environment.

7. To develop teacher and teacher aides competencies in identifying, selecting, designing, and using bilingual-bicultural media and materials and instructional strategies.

8. To develop effective liaison between the school and parents from different ethnic groups in the community and, therefore increase parental participation and support in the bilingual-bicultural program.

While the objectives of a pluralistic program such as the one described above may appear very desirable goals, there are some very real problems involved when it comes to the implementation of such a program. Holm (1971: 9) suggests that a true Maintenance program may be beyond a community's resources, and that a 'transitional' program, one in which instruction begins in the tribal language, but which eventually moves into English may be necessary for some time, especially if both teaching staff and printed materials in the language are either unavailable or in short supply. He feels that a transitional program is at least a beginning, and, as the resources become available, it may be converted into a Maintenance program.

The decision as to whether or not to implement a Pluralistic Program versus an Assimilative one may depend on many factors. The nature of the sociolinguistic community involved is probably the most important of these. To clarify some of these factors, Gaarder (1972: 26-28) has prepared a list of those conditions which favor and those which resist assimilation. (Table One). While Gaarder had Spanish in mind when he prepared the table, the same factors apply to our situation to a greater or lesser extent.

Table One Factors Assisting and Factors Resisting Assimilation

	Extra-linguistic socio-cultural factors	Favors shift to English	Resists shift to English
1.	Size and homogeneity of bilingual group.		Powerful resistance
2.	Historic priority		Powerful resistance
3.	Access and resource to renewal from a hinterland		Potentially powerful but is unexploited.
4.	Reinforcement by in-migration and immigration		Powerful resistance
5.	Relative social isolation including racist attitudes toward a visible minority	Struggle for integration in schools, housing favors shift as does assimilative bridge to English in bilingual schooling.	Differentiation as culturally different brown people. Pluralistic orientation to bilingual education and resistance to assimilation.
6.	Inter-generational stability of the extended family		Close-knit extended family especially grandparents and other elders living with grandchildren
7.	Order and age of learning		Spanish mother tongue and language of childhood is powerful psychological factor to resistance
8.	Relative proficiency in both tongues	Education solely through English favors shift; biling. education presently too weak to offset this	
9.	Specialized use by topics, domains, and interlocuteurs	Use of both languages for same purpose favors shift. Absence of socio-cultural divisions to reinforce difference in mother tongue facilitates shift.	Use of each language exclusively for certain topics and domains of life resists shift.

	Extra-linguistic socio-cultural factors	Favors shift to English	Resists shift to English
10.	Manner of learning each language	Learning both from same persons in same situations facilitates switching and shift	Learning from different persons in different situations resists shift
11.	Status of the bilingual groups.	Except to the extent that the bilingual's status favors Nos. 5 and 9 above, that status at present favors shift	Improved status if made congruent with Nos. 3,8,9. 17-22 would resist shift.
12.	Disappearance of the Spanish monolingual group	Powerful force toward complete shift	Establishment of diglossia. No. 9 could forestall shift.
13.	Attitudes toward cultural pluralism	Present absence of appropriate action by Spanish speakers facilitates shift. See Nos. 5,7, and 9.	Over-all national attitude of relative tolerance favors cultural pluralism.
14.	Attitudes toward both cultures.	Prevailing attitudes of both groups favor shift.	
15.	Attitudes toward each language; emotional attachment.	Other attitudes favor shifts. See Nos. 17, 18, 19, 20.	Emotional attachment to Spanish resists shift. (Language loyalty).
16.	Attitudes toward bilingualism		Resist shift
17.	Attitudes toward correctness	Powerfully facilitate shift.	

	Extra-linguistic socio-cultural factors	Favors shift to English	Resists shift to English
18.	Attitudes toward 'mixing' the languages	Powerfully facilitates shift	
19.	Modes of use of each language.	Virtual absence of reading and writing of Spanish by adults powerfully facilitates shift.	
20.	Relative usefulness of each language.	Limitation of Spanish to oral, intimate, informal uses limits prestige, facilitates mixing and shift.	
21.	Function of each language in social advance.	Powerfully facilitates shift.	
22.	Literary-cultural values.	Absence of emphasis reduces prestige and facilitates 'mixing' and shift.	

Gaarder sums up his comments with the statement that, "A fully developed written tradition would be a strong factor in language maintenance." (p.2)

Several authorities have stressed the need for a carefully done sociolinguistic assessment of any community before implementing a program of bilingual education, or, indeed, before making any serious decisions about language. Kjolseth (1973: 7) outlines the nature of such an assessment.

Before the program actually is begun, empirical research is

> conducted locally to ascertain: 1) the dominance configuration of the ethnic and non-ethnic languages for several social categories of speakers in the community; 2) the linguistic features of the specific varieties of ethnic language spoken locally; and 3) the attitudes of various social categories of community residents towards both the local and non-local ethnic language varieties.

Fishman (1972: 90) puts the problem another way and adds other areas in need of research, suggesting that, ". . . the following information seems minimal, if the school and community are going to make conscious, explicit decisions about an appropriate bilingual program:

1. A survey that would establish the languages and varieties employed by both parents and children, by societal domain or function.

2. Some rough estimate of their relative performance level in each language, by societal domain.

3. Some indication of community (and school staff) attitudes toward the existing languages and varieties, and toward their present allocation to domains.

4. Some indication of community (and school staff) attitudes toward changing the existing language situation.

Studies such as those just described above, while they are needed for planning the program both with respect to language use and material selection, will also serve to provide a datum point against which to measure changing attitudes in the community. In addition, Krear (1971: 244) points out that they will also serve to give some idea about the timing of any proposed changes.

> It follows then that the bilingual reality in a community has a direct relationship to the urgency or lack of it for learning English to meet personal needs. That is to say, in a community of language transfer, children need to learn English efficiently and immediately. A program designed to mirror the bilingual reality of such a community would give greater emphasis to English as a second language or dialect than to dialect or mother tongue development. On the other hand, in a language maintenance community where there is no urgency to learn English, a greater emphasis can be given to dialect or mother tongue development.

In making decisions about the implementation of any program involving language* questions such as the following must be asked:

> Does the situation warrant a truly bilingual program and to what extent?
>
> Are there a sufficient number of children who speak only or mainly their vernacular when they come to school?
>
> Do the parents of the children want such a program?
>
> Will it be backed by the local community? (Rebert, 1971: iv)

In obtaining answers to these questions the educator must be especially careful to ensure that what he is being told does, in fact, represent the wishes of the community. Kersey (1972: 475) outlines some of the pitfalls that may beset the unwary.

> Educators are often led to believe that an educational concensus exists by the exhortations of Indian leaders who espouse the socially acceptable position that their people want and need more education. And who should speak with greater authority than the chosen leader? Yet, a gap often exists between the image which tribal leaders wish to foster and the grass roots sentiment of their people . . . . Occasionally the leaders who remonstrate most loudly about the need for education are the very ones who do least positively to promote schooling among their people, and a few have reportedly discouraged their people from taking advantage of the 'white man's education.'

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* Decisions regarding the implementation or non-implementation of a bilingual program should not be made lightly. The effect which a school has on the community that it serves is not always thoroughly understood. To take as one perhaps unusual example of this, Wolcott (1967) points out in his book on education in an Indian community on Northern Vancouver Island that the closing down of the local school took away the only reason for the continued existence of the village and it was abandoned.

From the discussion which has just taken place it will be obvious that there are no pat answers, no ready-made solutions which will offer a panacea for every community's problems. Instead, the situation in each community must be studied with care, the wishes of the community taken into account, the available resources examined, and then, and only then should decisions regarding Maintenance or Transfer Programs be made. As Kjolseth (1973: 16) suggests, "The relevant issue today is not simply monolingual vs. bilingual education, but more essentially what social goals will serve the needs of the majority of ethnic group members and what integrated set of program design features will effectively realize them?"

Chapter Five OPINION REGARDING THE LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION

As was suggested in the previous chapter, the concensus of opinion in the community must be taken into account in any decisions involving bilingual education. In addition, the statement which various influential authorities, both in Canada and in the United States, have made from time to time about his problem of language use in the elementary school merit some consideration.

In view of the fact that education in the native language may seem to be in conflict with programs in standard English, it is interesting to read the resolution which the professional association of teachers involved in the latter type of program sent to the Secretary of the Interior of the United States (Bilingual Education, 1971: 8) following their annual meeting in March 1971 at New Orleans.

> Whereas we recognize that any human being's language constitutes his link with the real world, and
> Whereas we are collectively engaged in teaching another language to human beings who already possess a fully articulated and developed language system,
>
> Therefore be it resolved that TESOL [Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages] affirms
>
> 1. That bilingual education must be assumed to mean education in two languages;
>
> 2. That this in turn presupposes full recognition by every available means of the validity of the first language;
>
> 3. That such recognition includes positive attitudes of all teachers and administrators toward the student's language;
>
> 4. That the validity of that language not only as a communication system but as a viable vehicle for the transfer and reinforcement of any subject content in the classroom must be central in curriculum policy; and
>
> 5. That, where numbers of individuals justify such concern, the student's own language must specifically constitute a segment of the curriculum.

The authors of this resolution hoped thereby to dispel any notion that supporters of bilingual education and supporters of ESL programs

were in any way in conflict. They did make the point, however, that an essential part of any solidly-based program in bilingual education was an ESL component.

Even earlier than the TESOL resolution, Dr. Bruce A. Gaarder, a highly respected authority on second language teaching in his own right, and chief of the Modern Foreign Language Section of the U.S. Office of Education, presented a paper in 1967 to the U.S. Senate's Special Subcommittee on Bilingual Education, a paper which has provided the rationale for the greater number of the bilingual education programs created in that country since that date. Dr. Gaarder's position on bilingual education, and he speaks for the bulk of second language teachers as well, is as follows:

1. If English is the sole medium of instruction, the children are likely to become retarded in their school work to the extent to which they are deficient in English.

2. A strong, mutually reinforcing relationship between the home and the school make it necessary that the mother tongue be used by some of the teachers, and as a school language.

3. Language is the most important exteriorization of the self. Rejecting the mother tongue can be expected to affect seriously and adversely the child's concept of his parents, his home, and of himself.

4. The child's unique potential career advantage, his bilingualism, will have been destroyed if he has not achieved reasonable literacy in his mother tongue It will be almost useless for him for any technical or professional work where language matters. [This refers more to Spanish- and French- speaking students of course.]

5. Our people's native competence in other languages and the cultural heritage each language transmits are a national resource that we badly need and must conserve by every reasonable means.

While the two previous statements deal with bilingual education as it affects many cultures, the Center for Applied Linguistics, with the help both of specialists and native people involved in Indian Education in 1973 (Appendix II) submitted a very detailed proposal on

the education of Indian children to the Bureau of Indian Affairs. The following recommendations were made in the field of language:

Recommendation 3

Within the above stricture (that the tribal or local Indian educational authority should make the final decision regarding the language program at a given school), the language of the home should be the language of beginning instruction and special attention should be given to developing the English language skills of all children.

The above recommendation is broad and complex. For the sake of clarity we will break it into some of its most important component parts and discuss each one separately.

Recommendation 3.1

Where children enter school speaking only the ancestral language, that should be the language of beginning instruction.

Children should not be held back in their other school learning until they have mastered sufficient English, as is now the case in all but the bilingual programs. The research demonstrating the advantage of a bilingual approach, not only on attitudinal factors but also on academic achievement, even reading comprehension in the national language, is by now considerable and all points in the same direction: Children learn all school-related subjects best in the language they can comprehend. Insistence on instruction in a foreign tongue (as English is for many Indian children) serves only to retard their academic development considerably and to awaken a host of negative attitudes. On the other hand, use of the language of the home enhances academic development and serves to build positive relations between the child (and his family) and the school. Even the skills of fully accredited teachers (in the traditional sense of college degrees and state certification) cannot adequately overcome the barrier to understanding inherent in the lack of a common system of communication with the children.

Recommendation 3.2

When children enter school fluent in both the ancestral language and standard English, the local Indian educational authority should decide the role that each language should play in the child's school life.

Since English will at least partially complement the use of

> the mother tongue in the upper elementary and secondary grades, the ancestral language should continue to be used as a language of instruction as well as be studied as a subject in its own right, throughout the child's school career.

What is the situation in Canada? In our own country there seems to be a considerable body of agreement on the matter. For example, in 1971 the Indian Tribes of Manitoba recommended that in those communities where the Indian language was the dominant community language, it be used as the vehicle of instruction during the early years in elementary school (Indian Tribes of Manitoba, 1971: 121). Furthermore, since there is a place in the curriculum set aside for 'second language instruction,' they recommended that this block of time, found both in elementary and in secondary school, be used for further study in the ancestral language.

In Alberta, in their brief to the Worth Commission on Education, the Indian Association of Alberta (Ledgerwood, 1972: 101) stressed their desire for a program in which bilingualism in the native language of the community and in English should be stressed at all grade levels with academic credit being given for such study. As an interesting aside, they envisaged a 'two-way' program by virtue of which non-Indian children would be allowed to attend reservation schools in order to learn the Indian language and study Indian culture.

Finally, at a meeting held in Yellowknife in 1972, the Executive Council of the National Indian Brotherhood compiled a position paper from the briefs submitted by the Indian Associations of the various provinces. In this paper (National Indian Brotherhood, 1974: 24) they indicate their support for the use of the ancestral language beginning at the pre-school level and continuing up to the end of the first or second year of elementary school. Once again, however, they underline the need to carry out such a policy only after "consultation with, and clear approval from, a majority of parents in the communities concerned (ibid.)."

The recommendations to the Bureau of Indian Affairs by the Center for Applied Linguistics (Appendix II) mentioned earlier point up the necessity of looking at each situation in itself, rather than to attempt to formulate any overall treatment, suggesting that, "The great diversity of Native American languages (of which there are over 100) and cultures, as well as important differences in local situations makes attempts to formulate uniform solutions impractical and undesirable, particularly if done by non-Indians. Probably in no other field of education is the need for local approaches to problems so important and necessary. (p.3)"

The Center also stresses the need to provide communities with a statement of all the possible alternatives which fit the situation under study. These statements should be free of 'pedaguese' and, ideally, should make use of a variety of media to demonstrate the many different possibilities in action elsewhere. Two films of this nature, "Haskie" and "Education in Eskimo" have been produced with this goal in mind. With such information at their disposal, the communities involved should be able to make decisions on an informed basis.

Chapter Six FACTORS AFFECTING THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS OF THE BILINGUAL CHILD

The research in the area of bilingualism is very much complicated by the many factors other than language which appear to exert some influence on the child. As early as the pre-natal condition the factors of the environment may determine the child's educational success. Unfortunately, since most researchers in the field of bilingualism have taken for granted the fact that the bilingual child is no different from other children as far as physical health goes, Ulibarri (1968: 233) is unable to point to any significant amount of research in the area of physical growth, health, and sickness related to the bilingual child. He does point out one very important factor, however.

> What has to be considered is the generally poverty-stricken conditions that characterize the minority groups - including bilingual minorities. More recently in the McGovern Report, a task force has indicated strong evidence that mental growth is affected and arrested by dietary and nutritional deficiencies during the pregnancy period and especially during the first six months of the life of an infant. If the assessment of these studies is correct, it is a frightful consequence that we have to face if poverty is not eradicated from the life of the bilingual-bicultural minorities. It thus becomes possible to have generation after generation of impoverished slow learners among these groups.

Poverty, and its accompanying nutritional problems, therefore, are one possible reason for the generally-acknowledged failure of bilingual groups to do well in school. What are some of the other considerations? Regretably there is not a great deal of information available, since, as Coombs (1971: 12) suggests, the assumption that an incoming child speaking a language other than English will become an ineffective learner is so widely held that it has been too readily accepted by researchers in the past. The net result, according to Coombs, is that ". . . research which controls for other possible causative variables is almost completely lacking (ibid.)"

The role that some of these other factors play is best pointed

out in a study by Coleman which Coombs cites (loc.cit.).

> While Mexican-Americans, Puerto-Rican, and Indian-American students, three groups containing a high percentage of students with non-English-speaking backgrounds, all achieve well below white students and the national norms, Negro students, nearly all of whom had English as a first language, are the lowest achieving group of all. And Oriental-Americans, many of whom, especially Chinese, come from homes where adults at least habitually speak a language other than English, achieve close to the national norms.

The respect which most Oriental parents hold for education and for the teacher is too well documented to need mention here. This attitude may account for the level of achievement among their children. As for the others, school is too often though of as either the "White Man's school" or one where little attention is paid to the need to take children at the point where they are and to progress from there. Schools are usually regarded as middle-class with middle-class values taught in them. As such they would hold little appeal for any of the other groups mentioned above.

Indeed, it is this problem of lack of relevance to his own culture as perceived by the student which may be the single most powerful factor in the case of the Indian child and the school. Both Bernard Spilka and John Bryde (cited in Coombs, 1971: 12) have pointed out the problem of anomie (cultural normlessness) and the general alienation of Indian students. In fairness, Fuchs and Havighurst (1972: 155) point out some serious deficiencies in much of the research, but they do accept that the Indian adolescent does have some very real self-doubt about his chances in a White-controlled job market.

> They are not depressed, anxious, paranoid, or alienated, as a group. They can make use of educational and economic opportunities. However, they do have the same problems that the youth of other low-income groups have, and these problems are complicated to a degree by the fact that they are Indians.

That there are ways of improving this self-concept is shown by

a study by Joseph Pecaro (1971: 1757A). Concerned that existing Social Studies programs did little to present the role of the Indian either in history or in the present he devised a series of special lessons which emphasized very positively the Indian's role. His findings, after comparing two groups, both of which included Indian and non-Indian students, were that the special lessons produced a significant improvement in the attitudes of the experimental group. In addition, the Indians in the experimental group improved more than the non-Indian students.

Similar findings, this time comparing two groups of Indian students are reported by Vivian One Feather (cited in Mech,1974 : 7).

> The purpose of the study was to improve the self-image of ninth grade Oglala Sioux students through presenting them with factual knowledge about their own history and culture as prepared by the Oglala people. Evaluation was based on pre-testing and post-testing the ninth graders with comparative analysis with ninth graders in a control group. Results of the methods used with the experimental group suggest improved attitudes toward school while those of the control group remained essentially the same and there appeared to be a growing negativism toward white people by the control group.

The family itself is a source, quite innocently, of course, of much of the problem. Fuchs and Havighurst, while decrying the current feeling that alienation and lack of self-confidence are a factor in every Indian student's educational progress, do admit (1972: 128) that these may be factors in the case of <u>some</u> students. However, they point out other influences which they feel are more pertinent, observing that:

> . . . their school performance is probably negatively affected by environmental factors well before the age of puberty. . . .
>
> It is well known that achievement in school subjects is correlated with the pupil's family background. In studies of the various factors that determine school achievement, the socioeconomic status of the family proves to be more influential than the characteristics of the school. However, in cases where the family cannot help the pupil much, school may actually compensate to some extent.

> There are several reasons for family background being a handicap in relation to school achievement of many Indian pupils in an American school. The first reason is that the great majority of Indian pupils are raised in poverty-stricken families, and poverty is generally a disadvantage for school achievement. Also, with the exception of a growing minority of Indians, most Indian families have little formal education and therefore Indian children are far more dependent upon the school for academic instruction than children whose families are in a position to assist them in this area. . . .
>
> Conditions of poverty and illiteracy are not conducive to providing facilities which help children in school such as books, encyclopedias, and space for quiet study. In addition, the use of formal education for earning a living has not ordinarily been apparent in many Indian communities, although this is changing as employment opportunities for educated Indians increase.

Despite this type of problem, Hawthorn stresses that the Indian child is as motivated to succeed as the non-Indian child (1967: 129). The studies which were carried out in the course of his investigation, however, also revealed that this motivation dropped sharply after a few years in school, while the white student's motivation increased. Again the family enters the picture, for, as Hawthorn observes, "The diversity can perhaps be explained by difference of experience in success and in support from significant adults."

Hawthorn's finding of an initially strong motivation on the part of the Indian child finds theoretical support in a study by Kinsella (1971: 1-2). Kinsella feels that the child's ego-identity has three elements: "(a) a coherent and complex organization of elements; (b) a manageable mutual regulation between the individual and the environment; and (c) a sense of assurance that this mutual regulation between the individual and the environment is going to persist. . . ."

The Indian child will succeed if factors (b) and (c) obtain, as they usually do in the case of his white schoolmate. Most often, however, in the case of the Indian child the contrary is true, and with predictable results - the lowering of motivation that Hawthorn has indicated.

If a breakdown in the condition described in (b) and (c) above is responsible for failure in school, this breakdown may have as its origin a drastic contrast between the culture of the Indian child and that of the school. As an example of the relationship involved, Lane, speaking about Canadian Indians (1972: 353) points out that:

> The degree to which learning, whether in or out of school, constitutes 'learning in an alien culture' depends upon the degree of cultural distance between the individual and the particular situations in which he finds himself. Clearly this will vary from person to person. A middle class urban Indian child of highly acculturated parents is not raised in the same subculture as a child in a family dependent on welfare and living in an overcrowded house on a nearby unserviced reserve, although they may attend the same school. Yet, when that school population is studied, they are lumped together as 'the Indian sample.'

There are other culturally-related differences which enter into the picture. The way in which the child is treated in an Indian home and the way in which he is treated at school may be quite different. Hawthorn (1967) has described some of these differences in some detail. As a result of this difference in approach, the child's expectations as to how he will be treated in school will not be realized, and his hurt at not being treated as he had expected to be may be the source of much of the dropout problem mentioned earlier.

Another factor which may be culturally-based is that of intelligence. The school's assessment of intelligence, and by extension its curricular strategies, is based on what are largely Indo-European norms. Collier (1973: 4) suggests that failure to take this difference into account may be setting up the Indian or Eskimo child for disaster:

> An anthropological view of intelligence is that it is both learned and expressed within a cultural system. Ruth Benedict (1934) refers to this phenomenon as the 'language of culture,' through which man develops, communicates, and solves his life problems. The cultural language is the total communication of group-shared values, beliefs, and verbal and non-verbal language.

> The intelligence of the Native child must be observed in this communication context. Behavior outside one's own system can appear unintelligent. It is generally accepted that much of basic intelligence is formed early in childhood within a particular environmental program. Acuteness of mind rests within the first language, and the initial intelligence rests upon experiences in the first environment, whether that be desert, jungle, or Arctic snow. From this is born the resourcefulness and intellectual vigor that we hope will be the equipment of the child as he grows. This presents the dilemna that it may be difficult and sometimes impossible to utilize full intelligence except within the cultural system that nurtured the child. It is this challenge that presents cross cultural education as a conflict between cultures, deeply involving the personality and culture of both teachers and students.

Ohannessian (1972: 17) takes Collier's point a step further and suggests that learning strategies designed for the white child may be totally inappropriate for the Indian child for the following reasons:

> One such factor [for apparent failure to learn] may be differences in what may be called the respective styles of learning prevalent in the major American culture and that of some Indian communities. The first stresses learning by doing, whereas there is reason to believe that the second relies on prolonged observation, or 'prelearning', which is then followed by learning. A reluctance to try too soon and the accompanying fear of being 'shamed' if one does not succeed may account for the seemingly passive, uninterested, and unresponsive attitude of Indian students. Understanding of the ways in which learning takes place among Indians may prove of far greater significance for the education of Indians in general and for their success in acquiring English in particular than elaborate projects based on patterns of learning behavior that are alien or even abhorent to Indians.
>
> Another factor may be the Indian cultural trait of noninterference. There seems to be general agreement among anthropologists that for the Indian any form of coercion may result in bewilderment, disgust, fear, or withdrawal. Thus, coercion in the classroom may result in silent withdrawal, taking the form of noneresponsiveness, apparent indifference, laziness, or even flight.

Collier (loc. cit.) concludes this discussion by suggesting the direction that Indian education must take:

In this perspective, effective education could be the degree of harmony between the student's culturally and environmentally acquired intelligence and the learning opportunities and the intelligence-developing procedures and goals of the school. Reasonably, if significant conflict lies between the Eskimo processes and the school, some variety of educational failure must be expected. Teachers may be seen teaching ideally with the flow of Native intelligence, or teaching negatively against the Native stream of consciousness. Granted, these are subtle energies, but they are there to be utilized or ignored, and they may well make the difference between a motivated or a 'turned-off' classroom.

Chapter Seven LANGUAGE PROBLEMS AND THE SCHOOL

The Indian child raised on a reservation and the White child coming from a middle or even many lower class homes do not enjoy the same advantages as far as language is concerned. In his study of the Indians of Canada, Hawthorn (1967: 112-13) describes the differences which may exist in the two situations as follows:

Indian	Non-Indian
Conversation between children and adults limited; questions often answered in monosyllables; custom sometimes demands silence from children in the presence of adults; English spoken by adults often inaccurate and limited in vocabulary. Some children have the opportunity to hear stories and folk tales which have colorful imagery and language. No one reads to the child.	Conversations often unlimited; detailed answers given as often as monosyllabic replies; child's speech and labelling may be corrected constantly. English spoken by parents usually correct and diverse; child is read to often and has books of his own.

What effect does this difference have when it comes time for the two children to enter school? Hawthorn feels that, in view of the heavy premium which the school places on verbal skills, the child who has grown up in a home with books, and surrounded by adults willing and eager to help him develop his linguistic skills has a distinct advantage over the child who has not enjoyed these benefits. (p.114) This difference will become even more intensified when the two children begin to learn to read.

> The child in the latter situation has not developed the auditory discrimination which is necessary for learning to read because he has not had the necessary corrective feedback. Because conversation has seldom been directed at him his general level of responsiveness and attentiveness to incoming stimuli may be lower than that of the child described in the middle-class situation. This again lessens his facility in learning to read. Low responsiveness also has implications for reception of reinforcement, correction, and attention span, the relationships of which to the formal education process are obvious (ibid.).

Teachers encountering this situation and who may not be fully

aware of the causes of the Indian child's apparently slow development may be led into labelling the child as retarded. Herbert (1972: 4), speaking about the situation in the Southwestern United States, offers proof of what may easily happen:

> School personnel and parents of Mexican-American children have repeatedly voiced concern over the high proportions of failures and drop-outs among Mexican-American children. Some of the practices for assigning children to mentally retarded classrooms are also being questioned for their validity. Leary reports that an analysis of California's 65,000 mentally retarded children discloses that 2.14% of all Spanish surnamed students in public schools have been directed into classes for the educable mentally retarded. Less than .71% of all the Anglo students are so classified. To express this statistic another way, California's Spanish surnamed students, who comprise 15% of the total school population, represent over 28% of the total enrollment in classes for the educable mentally retarded.

To understand the source of the problem outlined by Herbert, we must look at the literature in education relating to the effects of socio-economic level on language acquisition. In so doing it must be borne in mind that this literature tends to deal with the child's first language, hence the import of it for a two-language situation may present an even more serious picture. In her study on bilingual children, Muriel Saville-Troike (1973: 24) sums up the points of view currently held about socio-economic status (SES) and language acquisition.

> There are research reports which to some extent support this notion of linguistic retardation among children of low socio-economic status (SES): Jones and McMillan (1973) find their speech to be 'less fluent and grammatically less complex,' and Queensberry (1971) finds significant lag in their syntactic maturity at age four. Although the SES children in these studies tend to be from minority groups in the United States, there is some data from other language communities as well. In a study of Italian children in Rome, Parisi (1971) finds that SES differences appear in language development at about 3 1/2 years and that the split gradually widens, especially between 5 1/2 and 6.

Saville-Troike then presents the opposing views:

> Not all researchers agree: Templin (1957) reports an SES

> difference in language production at age 3, but says there is no evidence of cumulative deficit. Shriner and Miner (1968) find no SES differences in children's language structures and Evans (1971) finds no SES (or Mexican-American/ Anglo) differences in auditory discrimination or repetition tasks. In a fairly extensive study of children in Baltimore and the surrounding area, Entwisle (1967) found low SES first graders living in slums more advanced linguistically than higher SES children in the suburbs (although by third grade the slum children lagged behind).

This last finding is interesting in view of the 'lagging behind' aspect. As Saville-Troike points out, however, each of these researchers was assessing a different aspect of language, and it is not surprising that the research is not in agreement. What the research does indicate is the need for a carefully controlled evaluation of what children from the Indian population in Alberta do know about their language and the language which they are in the process of learning. Without hard research in this area, any meaningful curriculum planning is doomed to futility from the start.

Another aspect which must be considered in such a study relates to the level of English which some children may come to school with. In some ways the child who comes to school speaking no English at all is in a better position than the child who <u>appears</u> to be a speaker of English. Hawthorn describes the problem as follows:

> The child who comes from a home where English is spoken by parents as a second language probably speaks 'Indian English.' This is a variant in which English structure and words are used but in which forms and meanings often vary from the standard ones of the school, and although the child who speaks Indian English is viewed as an English speaker by the school, in most cases he is as much in need of instruction in language as the non-English speaking child.

Miriam Dancy (1968: 25) agrees with Hawthorn's interpretation of this difference and decries the fact that children such as those described above are usually placed in remedial classes for children who speak English but coming from a home where English is the first language. It is unfortunate that Indian children do not share the same problems - the Indian child's problems are phonological and

structural, whereas the White child's problem may be a very superficial one such as spelling.

Davey (1961: 496) suggests that another important way in which the two groups differ is in the area of vocabulary. From this and the foregoing statement, it would appear that teachers must be alerted to the fact that they are not dealing with a simple pathology of English as a first language, but with a problem which demands very different strategies.

Finally, Zintz et al. (1971: 15) point out the specific problems which impede any attempt on the part of the non-English-speaking child to achieve in any academic area involving language.

> The construction and use of several tests of different facets of the English language have provided convincing evidence that these children do not have command of the English language with sufficient sophistication to use multiple meanings of common words, to respond to simple analogies, to interpret either idioms or slang expressions, to provide words of opposite meanings - a simple antonym test, or to provide elementary morphological or syntactical forms in English usage.

Obviously, it is going to be necessary to assess the English competence of the child on his arrival in school. This will at least focus the attention of the school on the types of problems with which it will have to deal. One very general type of categorization for students with different language backgrounds has been proposed by Spolsky and Holm (1971: 62). This is used as the basis of classification for the research which they are carrying out on the Navajo Reservation.

N: When the child first came to school, he or she appeared to know only Navajo, and no English.

N-e: When the child first came to school, he or she appeared to know mainly Navajo; he or she knew a little English, but not enough to do first grade work.

N-E: When the child came to school, he or she was apparently equally proficient in English or Navajo.

n-E: When the child came to school, he or she knew mainly English, and also knew a bit of Navajo.

E: When the child came to school, he or she appeared to know only English, and no Navajo.

This scale appears to work well as a preliminary screen, but while it talks about proficiency in two languages, or language dominance, it says nothing about the varying degrees of competence on the part of those children who speak English. A scale which provides this type of information is that of the Board of Education of the City of New York (Dillon,n.d.: 111).

Rating	Definition
A(6)	Speaks English, for his age level, like a native with no foreign accent.
B(5)	Speaks English with a foreign accent, but otherwise approximates the fluency of a native speaker of like age.
C(4)	Can speak English well enough for most situations met by typical native pupils of like age, but still must make a conscious effort to avoid the language forms of his native tongue. Depends, in part, upon translation and therefore speaks hesitantly upon occasion.
D(3)	Speaks English in more than a few stereotyped situations, but speaks it haltingly at all times.
E(2)	Speaks English only in those stereotyped situations for which he has learned a few useful words and expressions.
F(1)	Speaks no English.

Obviously the same scale could be used for the other language as well. While the use of such scales represents a rough-and-ready form of assessment, there are dangers involved in their use as Knachman (1974: 81) points out:

> There are large discrepancies between students' English vocabularies and their teacher's estimates of them. Inexperienced teachers, and particularly ones who have not studied a foreign

> language themselves, tend to assume that a child who can carry on a passable social conversation can also understand what is being said in the classroom. Closer examination frequently reveals that the child has a very small supply of phrases in common use around the daily routines of school, play, store, etc. and an additional supply of nouns. Verbs, prepositions, and other more esoteric items which are crucial to making any sense out of school work may be extremely scanty. The teacher - misjudging the degree to which he is being understood - may spread his best efforts in vain and then decide that his students are dumb or just not interested in learning when in fact they may simply be bored because they don't understand the words.

What are the alternatives? Fortunately, work is being done on test instruments which will measure more precisely the English performance of Indian children. Eugène Brière has prepared a battery of tests for children in Grades 4-6 of the Bureau of Indian Affairs schools in the United States (1971). The battery includes 1) a written test in two forms, 2) a listening comprehension test, 3) an oral production test, 4) an administrative manual for the teacher and 5) an interpretive manual. One use of the test, known as the Test of Proficiency in English as a Second Language (TOPESL), is as a placement instrument. It may also be used for diagnostic purposes. Other tests have been prepared by Southwest Educational Development Laboratory for use in the primary grades (Valencia, 1972: 44).

In view of the problems involved, what kind of support is there for the teaching of English as a second language (ESL) to Indian children? From reading the available literature on this topic, my own feeling is that, while there is a great deal of support for teaching the ancestral language, most seem to feel that this is not to be done at the expense of the child learning English, since most Indian parents see English as a necessary acquisition if their child is to make his way in the White man's world.

This support may even prove to be embarrassing on occasion, as witness the situation described by Slager and Madsen (1972: 37-38) who describe an attempt to encourage the maintenance of an Eskimo dialect (Yuk) in Alaska. The major problem which the team involved encountered

was to persuade parents that teaching Yuk to their children did not represent a backward step. "After all, they had been taught for years that English was the language of instruction and that their own language was not the road to success. Initial discussion with parents was often interspersed with comments like, 'You teach them English; we'll teach them Yuk at home.' Even though Yuk is the most viable language in Alaska today and there are approximately 15,000 speakers, it was not until parents were convinced that Yuk would not be taught in the schools but would only be used while the children were learning English that they began to adopt a positive attitude toward the experiment."

Other sources have stressed the support for English programs from Indian parents and students. While stressing the interest that exists in the tribal language, Fuchs and Havighurst (1972: 206) found in the course of the National Study of American Indian Education that both parents and children from Indian homes appreciated the need to learn English. They point out that only ". . . four students out of twelve hundred interviewed indicated that they believed that knowledge of their native language was more important than knowledge of English." Even allowing for those students who told the interviewer what they felt the interviewer wanted to hear, this is still an impressive figure.

The importance of an adequate English program is stressed by Bowd (1972: 74) who compared several groups of Indian boys aged twelve to fourteen from Bella Bella, Cluny, Morley, Lac la Biche, and Calgary with similar groups of non-Indian students. Bowd feels that it is the school rather than the child's background which determines success or failure for the Indian child.

> The fact that Indian children tend to drop out of school more frequently and that they tend to be grade-retarded in comparison with white children is commonly attributed to the Indian child's background which is frequently described as culturally deprived. The data presented in this study suggest that to some extent it is the school itself which determines that the Indian child will fail, that the criteria for success differ between white and Indian.

He then goes on to discuss the language factors which may bring this situation about:

> Irrespective of the diversity of cultural environment sampled, in all the native groups vocabulary appears as the prime determinant of grade level. However, the Indian child has usually had less opportunity for the development of English language skills, and their use as a criterion for grade placement penalizes him severely. Among the sample of white children studied, where many came from bilingual homes, it was general intelligence rather than verbal skills which determined grade level.
>
> Clearly the language background of the Indian children studied is such that they have, on the average, developed poorer English vocabularies than the white children. The absence of significant correlations between the child's use of an Indian language and grade level, together with the positive correlations with parental use of English suggests that inadequate exposure to English rather than the use of the native language is the principal reason for language problems at school.

He suggests in conclusion that while English should not be developed at the expense of the child's ancestral language, there is a very real need for specialized programs in English as a second language at the early grade levels, and that grade promotion be based on something other than verbal ability. In the light of his later comment that most school subjects appear to be based on verbal ability, it is not quite clear how he proposes to do this unless he is willing to accept social promotion.

Elizabeth Willink outlines the very specific skills which the young child requires if he is to be successful in the school program (1973: 183):

> Only when the learner has acquired a familiarity with, a knowledge of, the English that he is assumed to have acquired by the curricular materials, is he ready for the intensive development of the psycho-motor techniques that reading and the productive language arts require, i.e., only then is the learner ready to be taught by these curricular materials. Only then can he begin to draw upon his knowledge of English and his growing skill in the English language arts for his general mental development. This means that there should be a period of several years

> in the school program during which the language itself, English, should be taught as intensively and as efficiently as possible with great emphasis on listening comprehension. This comprehension should include comprehension of structural signals, which signify the more difficult to understand abstract relationship concepts, as well as comprehension of easier to grasp content vocabulary. The skills of speaking, reading, and writing in English also should be taught, but the student should not be asked to express or read meanings in English that he has not yet learned to understand in spoken English.

In its Recommendations for Language Policy in Indian Education, the Center for Applied Linguistics (Appendix II: 7) makes some very pertinent points, first about the use of what Hawthorn called "Indian English", and then about the problem of English as a Second Language in general. Their first recommendation is that teachers must be shown how to build on the non-standard English which the child brings to school and must adopt an accepting attitude while this is taking place. The Center suggests that, "The language a child brings to school is an important part of himself and his group identification, and to reject it is to reject him and his values, and violates the fundamental principle of education which is to take the child where he is."

The Center appreciates that some children may enter school speaking standard English. In this case, the curriculum should be adapted to stress the cultural needs of the children. It suggests (p.9) that:

> Such adaptation would include the modification of teaching methods to take full advantage of the learning styles preferred by the children, the introduction of topics of greater relevance to Indian students, and positive references to Native American contributions which have been made to the area of study. Such references are needed both to counteract the negative stereotypes of Indians to which the students are exposed, their sources including American literature, and to provide positive models for the students, to increase their self-esteem and their pride in their identity as Native Americans and as members of their own tribe.

For those whose English is weak or non-existant, the Center stresses the need for a well-planned program in English as a second

language beginning right at the start of the elementary school program (p.6).

> In view of the failure of traditional methods to teach English adequately, learning cannot be left merely to chance exposure, but must be structured to some extent. Sentence patterns and vocabulary should be introduced systematically and practiced in meaningful contexts and motivational forms (such as games and guided learning activities), since children enjoy highly repetitive activities and learn from them. Since experience indicates that children need to communicate in a language to learn it well, second language instruction should be done as much as possible in a communicational context, either real or constructed.

Since this type of activity demands a thorough understanding of the theory and practice involved, the Center further recommends (p.8) that:

> In communities where English is not spoken by children entering school, teachers at all levels, including secondary, should be trained in methods of teaching English as a second language. If teachers in Head Start and kindergarten programs are not well-trained in ESL methods, it is preferable that instruction in English be deferred until the first grade, since experience has shown that children taught by inadequately trained teachers in Head Start and kindergarten do more poorly in first grade than children with no previous exposure to English.

The problems which occur when inadequately-trained teachers are working with English as a second language are described by Faralie Spell (1971: 5):

> As the situation now exists, in some cases, something called ESL, which is interpreted to be a highly formalized set of techniques for imitating sentences and learning 'patterns' is taught by teachers without sufficient education and training for from twenty minutes to an hour a day and then tucked neatly away. They then go about the business of teaching the language arts with no further thought for what has been taught as ESL or any conception that there needs to be any relationship to it.

As Faralie Spell suggests at another point (p.3) the usual solution to the problem has been to provide a series of short workshops

or seminars. These are usually very specific in nature and tend to focus on a bag of tricks. Her suggestion is that longer sequences of preparation in English as a second language are necessary, and such programs would then be able to give the teacher some understanding of the 'why' or theory underlying second language teaching and acquisition.

This is not to decry totally the workshop approach, providing, according to Spell, that such workshops are planned as an integrated series, a modular type of program, each module of which helps the teacher to develop an understanding both of the theory and of the techniques involved.

As to the English program itself, the linguistic nature of the surrounding community will have much to say about the approach which should be taken in planning a curriculum in English. Basing his comments on a Ph.D. thesis prepared by Elizabeth Willink in 1968, Wayne Holm describes the two basic approaches to the teaching of English as a second language. Willink has suggested that the two approaches may be described as "structural-sequential" and "situational". Holm describes the difference between the two as follows:

> A truly foreign language - foreign in that it is seldom heard outside the classroom - simply does not, in a classroom setting, teach itself. We assume, then, that in such a situation some attempt to present an ordered, developmental program of English structure, one which tends to move from simpler to more complex structure, is more likely to enable these children to learn to use English structure for their own purposes than is a program of random or topical language use. Hence the notion 'structural-sequential' English.
>
> On the other hand, in a setting such as ours, situations do unfortunately arise, which require the child to understand or to produce English the child has not been taught and may not know. A child needs to go to the toilet from the first day of school on. Most teachers do not talk Navajo. One cannot very well say that since yes-no questions with modals are not introduced until, say, the second year that the child must wait until then. One gives the child the phrase needed to enable him to cope with the situation here and now . . . .

> Situational English then is English out of sequence. As a child progresses through a developmental program of English, he should encounter relatively less 'situational' English each year.(p.6)

Holm makes the further comment that in the course of daily instruction in the early grades, it is virtually impossible to stay within the bounds of the language which has been taught on a structured basis. "To the extent that the teacher fails to do so, 'situational' English is (albeit often unknowingly) involved. The situation which exists in most classrooms similar to our own would seem to indicate a dual-nature type of English program, and it is such a program that Holm goes on to describe(1971: 7).

> The child entering such a program of education can be seen as having a dual English-language need: one, for an orderly presentation of English structure in such a way as to enable him, as efficiently as possible, to master the sentence-making machinery of English for his own purposes; the other, for a presentation of that English which will enable him to cope with the here-and-now of school life and instruction in English. In an adequate English language program for non-native speakers, both types of instruction are necessary. The 'mix' is a function of how much English, and what English, is being learned elsewhere.

What is the relation between the first language programs described earlier and the ESL program? Willink (1973: 186) suggests that cognitive skills are best developed in the language in which the child is strongest. "Once developed, as is possible with any skill, such language-mediated cognitive skills can, and should be capitalized on for transfer in the learning of other subject matter, including English." She suggests that such transfer will not take place spontaneously, and the teacher will have to " teach for transfer."

Failure to develop cognitive skills adequately in the long run, according to Willink, will penalize the child, since, "an acquired, well-developed skill has at least the potential for being transferred, while, on the other hand, a Navajo child whose language-mediated cognitive

skills have been left under-developed can, at best, transfer only such rudimentary skill to situations in which he is expected to use English as his medium."

In practical classroom terms, how is this to be done? MacDiarmid (1974: 91-92), in describing the bilingual program in Alaska in English and Yupik, makes the following comments:

> It's vital that the ESL teachers and the Yupik language teachers work together as a team so that the hour, or whatever it may be of ESL not be a separate entity from the rest of the child's programming. Certain facets of programming from the Yupik language part of the day can be and often should be reflected in the ESL portion. For example, the concepts of a story may be covered in the Yupik language with the children, and the concepts then can be carried over into the ESL portion of the day so that the basic understanding of what happens in a given story has already been mastered. Language structures should not be transferred to the ESL lesson from the Yupik program, however, concepts can be. The ESL teacher can then build upon what the child already knows.

From the foregoing discussion it becomes apparent that both the ancestral language and English have important roles to play in the education of the Indian child. Since the program in reading in most primary classes is central to later progress in school, and since the language of instruction is a crucial factor in the reading process, the following chapter will be devoted to a discussion of the role which bilingual or monolingual education plays in such a program.

Chapter Eight LANGUAGE POLICY AND THE READING PROCESS

Melville (1966: 2905A) in his doctoral dissertation in which he describes the factors which aided or impeded the educational achievement of Navajo students found that, "Reading ability was the one single factor that exerted the greatest influence over the academic achievement of the Navajo students." Melville's findings appear to confirm the stand taken by the specialists in vernacular education attending a UNESCO conference on the use of the vernacular language held in Paris in 1951, a conference to which I have already referred (UNESCO 1953). From this conference came two position statements.

> We take it as axiomatic that every child of school age should attend school and that every illiterate child should be made literate. We take it as axiomatic, too, that the best medium for teaching is the mother tongue of the pupil (p.6).

> It is axiomatic that the best medium for teaching a child is his mother tongue. Psychologically, it is the system of meaningful signs that in his mind works automatically for expression and understanding. Sociologically, it is a means of identification among the members of the community to which he belongs. Educationally, he learns more quickly through it than through an unfamiliar linguistic medium. (p.11).

Venezky (1970:336), while supporting the principle of literacy in the vernacular, points out some of the problems involved.

> The basis for native literacy programs is both theoretically and logically appealing from many standpoints. The teaching of reading to non-speakers of the national language has been uniformly dismal on this earth. By teaching reading in the native language, reading instruction can begin at an earlier age than if the standard language had to be taught first; the child's cultural heritage is honored; and a most difficult task - learning to read - is undertaken in the language that the child will always be most comfortable in - his own.
>
> On the other hand, native literacy programs are expensive; they require not only the development of new reading materials, but the training of special teachers and the design of testing procedures which are valid for the languages concerned.

Despite the difficulties which Venezky has raised, it is important to look at the problems which confront a child who comes to school to learn to read in a language other than his own. Joan Feeley (1970: 202) describes the type of competence which such a child must acquire in order to operate at the same level as the speakers of the standard language which is being taught.

> We know that children come to school with a large stock of aural-oral vocabulary [the speaker of English, that is] - from 2000 to 6000 words and higher depending upon the investigator and methods used. Phrases, sentences, and grammatical structure of the oral native language are learned in varying degrees in pre-school years. We try to use these familiar words and patterns (with some editing) in our experience charts and primer materials so that children can come to see that print is just 'talk written down;' we proceed to lead him from talking and listening to reading - if he is an English-speaking child. All of this thinking seems to be forgotten when dealing with the non-English-speaking youngster. By our 'English-only' atmosphere we negate his pre-school language learnings instead of improving them and building upon them. He enters a strange world of 'school language.' Is it any wonder that so many fail?

The advantages of beginning with the child's ancestral language, on the other hand, are presented by Sarah Gudschinsky (1971).

> The child who learns to read first in his mother tongue can make full use of his competence in the language. He recodes letters and word shapes to the phonemes and words that he already knows and uses; his aural input comes from a native speaker's control of the patterns of the language; and his decoding process is in terms of familiar vocabulary and discourse structure. To extend this basic literacy to a second language is a relatively small task compared with the overwhelming difficulty of learning to read for the first time in an unknown language.

Regretably these two points of view still fail to take into account the child who appears to be fluent in neither language. This is the point of view of Pryor (1968: 39). Ulibarri goes so far as to suggest that, ". . . in some minority groups whose native dialect is an incomplete language [presumably he means 'incomplete' for functioning in an English.

speaking environment], e.g., Navajo, the child may be as proficient in his native dialect as it is possible for him to get (1968: 230). Such cases would seem to require a detailed assessment of the student's linguistic situation - his dominance if any - in order to decide in which language he should begin to read. Perhaps the solution may be a developmental program of a pre-reading nature in his stronger language. Regretably, this problem does not appear to have been studied in any great detail.

Having outlined the two major possible approaches, I feel that a study of the research might prove helpful at this point. The greater part of this research may be summed up as supporting the position of literacy in the child's vernacular, whatever that might be. Even those studies which are not totally in favor of this position at least indicate that the child is no worse off. I'll begin by examining studies dealing with small-skill research, then move to studies which look at total programs.

There have been several studies which attempt to look at the problems confronting the child who has to learn English as a second language and whose first contact with reading is in the second language instead of his own. Dorothy Graham (1972: 849A) assessed the listening comprehension, reading comprehension, auditory discrimination, and I.Q. of Indian and non-Indian children in an integrated southern Saskatchewan school. Her findings are as follows:

> 1. There were significant differences between the Indian children and their non-Indian classmates in grades two and three . . . on measures of listening comprehension, reading comprehension and I.Q. The mean raw score of the Indian children in the sample was statistically significantly below that of their non-Indian classmates on each of the variables measured.
>
> 2. There was no significant difference . . . on a measure of auditory discrimination . . . .

Lillian Ivey (1968: 2438A) feels that, "Authorities in speech and reading concur that relationships exist among speaking competency,

vocabulary, and reading ability." Obviously, the child with a non-English background is likely to be penalized as he does not have a strong background in the basic English skills. To test her theory, Ivey assessed a group of Indian children on the skills mentioned above. Her study is useful, but is marred by failure to take into account the dominance of home language or of English which would have added a useful dimension. Her procedure and findings were as follows:

> A population of 185 Indian children from an Indian residential school was administered the Templin-Darley Tests of Articulation, the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test, the Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scale (sub-test vocabulary), the Gilmore Oral Reading Test, and the California Achievement Test (subtest reading).*
>
> The children were grouped according to tribal affiliation; subjects in Group I were Cherokee; Group II were Choctaw, Creek, or Seminole; Group III were members of other tribes or combinations of tribes. Results indicated that for Group I, significant correlations were found among speech competency, vocabulary, and reading ability. For Group II, relationships were not significant among speech competency, vocabulary, and reading ability, but the relationship between vocabulary and reading was found to be highly significant. Results for Group III corroborated the findings for Group I, showing significant correlations among Speaking competency, vocabulary, and reading ability. Evidence was presented showing that where deficiencies exist in vocabulary and reading, defective speech is the major contributing factor. Defects were found in both reading and vocabulary, but they did not differ significantly one from the other.

While the ability to read aloud accurately is no indication of the child's grasp of the reading process, failure to do so may serve as an indicator of potential trouble. It is for this reason that Joan Irwin's study (1969) of the oral miscues in the reading of a group of children selected randomly from grades two, four, and six of four Department of Indian Affairs schools in southern Alberta is useful. In this study, an

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*To the extent that these tests are culturally biased the results are, of course, untrustworthy.

oral miscue is defined as an oral response to the printed stimulus which was different from the anitcipated response.

The evaluator considered problems occurring at the phoneme-grapheme level, the phoneme-morpheme level, and the grammatical level. Her findings include the following:

> At the phoneme-grapheme level of linguistic structure, the substitution of phonemes in the medial position in words was a common miscue for grade two subjects. Omission of final phonemes occurred frequently in both grades four and six. Phonemic miscues appearing as insertions, omissions, or substitutions on inflectional suffixes were apparent in the reading of subjects at all grade levels for the examination of miscues at the phoneme-morpheme level. Morpheme (word) miscues occurring as omissions from the text and substitutions in the text on nouns were the most oustanding ones at the grammatical level. (Abstract).

Irwin felt as a result of her study that the solution to this problem lay in teaching an increased awareness of grammatical structure rather than continuing the emphasis on word recognition.

While not a research study in the true sense of the word, the paper given by Griese (1974: 24) at the Northern Cross-Cultural Education Symposium in Fairbanks in 1974 on the topic of comprehension among Indian and Eskimo students applies very directly to the problem of reading, particularly to the problem of teaching reading in the maternal language. Griese discusses the comment that is sometimes made that the Eskimo and the Indian have difficulty in thinking in an abstract fashion which will inevitably impede their progress in reading materials written for speakers of English. He suggests that contrary to what some people seem to feel, this problem is not an hereditary one, but rather that, ". . . in these primitive cultures intelligence was demonstrated through the people's ability to solve problems of a concrete nature relating to their immediate physical survival in a harsh environment, that these people were concerned with the 'how?' rather than the 'why?' "

The result of this is that school performance in an English setting is difficult for them because, as a result of this emphasis on the concrete in his own environment, the Eskimo or Indian child is at a very real loss in a "Western educational system which emphasizes the interpretation of language symbols, especially in reading." The solution, according to Greiese, ". . . is essentially one of moving the pupil who experiences difficulty in reading comprehension because his mental responses tend to involve concrete problem situations, to making these mental responses when confronted with the more abstract situations as encountered in reading content materials, such as history, geography, etc. (ibid.)."

This concludes the discussion of studies which look at reading in a second language. I'll now turn to those which look at the results of learning to read in the vernacular. Kaufman (1968: 522-23) attempted to determine whether or not instruction in reading skills in a student's native language would transfer to reading in English. Taking a group of Spanish-speaking grade sevens with Metropolitan Reading scores of between 3.5 and 5.0 grade placement, he taught the students specific reading skills using Spanish as a vehicle. My only question, unfortunately not answered in the research, is whether or not the students had been given any sort of remedial program in English before undergoing this treatment. It may very well be that all that they needed was a program in basic reading skills given in either language. In any case, the results are of interest to us in view of the problem which is under discussion.

The skills which Kaufman taught "included word attack, using context to develop word meaning, determining main ideas of paragraphs, following a sequence of events, following written directions, making inferences, recalling stated facts, and skimming." His findings were as follows:

> There was some evidence of positive transfer of learning from instruction in reading Spanish to reading ability in English

[at one of the two schools]* There was no reliable evidence of interference at either school.

This last comment is important if only to show that there were no unfortunate side effects. His second finding was that transfer had to be planned - hence his emphasis on specific skills. The point which he makes in this connection is a good one, though - that, "Greater reading ability in Spanish resulted from direct instruction in reading Spanish than from unplanned transfer from English alone." This means essentially, if I read him correctly, that the child must be overtly taught how to make the transfer to reading in English, even when he has begun to read in his maternal language. It is not enough simply to hand him a book in English once his oral skills in that language have reached a certain level.

Some of the earliest research in North America in this area was carried out on the effects of attendance by Chinese students at Chinese language schools which that community operated both after regular school hours and on Saturday. This research is also cited in Kaufman (1968: 521). The findings are fairly predictable.

> Yi-Ying Ma (1945) found no significant differences in English reading ability resulted from attendance at Chinese language schools. Symonds (1924) found no relationship between Chinese language school attendance and ability with the English language, but attributes to the Chinese language school attendance some slight retarding influence on the stock of English words and ability to use English words to express thoughts. Smith (1932) found that when there is a different order of reading direction, learning to read in two languages simultaneously produces confusion and more errors of reversal than when learning to read one language at a time.

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* The discussion suggests that there were major differences in practice between the two schools - more time was devoted to reading in Spanish in the school where transfer was observed, and <u>there was a greater initial competence in Spanish</u> in this school. This underlines the need to assess the child's incoming language strengths and weaknesses very carefully when carrying out research in this area.

We now come to research which attempts to assess the results of instruction given in the ancestral language where this language is not the standard language of the country. Program research of this nature is available from Sweden (which differs from the others in talking about a different dialect, rather than a different language), the Philippines, Vietnam, Mexico, Alaska, and Peru. It is these last five that interest us the most owing to the fact that it is an Indian or Eskimo population that is involved.

Suppose we deal with the Swedish material first, since the findings do have something relevant to say to us. Garcia, citing Osterberg (1961), has summarized this research as follows:

> In Sweden, bilingual children were organized into two groups. The experimental group of bilingual, elementary children received an initial ten weeks of reading instruction in Pitean, the local dialect, after which they were advanced to classes conducted in literary Swedish. The control group of bilinguals, who were also Pitean-Swedish speakers, received all reading instruction in literary Swedish. At the end of the first ten weeks, the Pitean-taught group had progressed further in reading than the Swedish-taught group. At the end of the school year, the experimental group performed significantly better than the control group on word recognition, speed, fluency, and accuracy of reading in literary Swedish. Beginning reading instruction in the vernacular and then switching to the school dialect had positive effects in this study (1973: 8).

It is most unfortunate that the war in Vietnam has virtually cut off any meaningful feedback from a program instituted in the highlands of Vietnam by USAID and the South Vietnamese government working in cooperation with the Summer Institute of Linguistics (Gudschinsky, 1971: 346). Until this program was begun, the language of instruction in this area was Vietnamese instead of the local Highland languages. Regretably, even those teachers who spoke the local languages were usually assigned to schools outside the area. The net result was low enrollment, especially as far as girls were concerned, much grade repetition, and a high dropout rate during the first few years of school.

Gudschinsky describes the new program and its results as follows:

> The Highlander Education program provides for a pre-year for all Highland children, in which they learn to read and write in their own language, to speak some Vietnamese, and to control in their own language some of the content material in arithmetic, hygiene, etc. When they enter first grade, they learn to read and write Vietnamese, they study the content subjects of the regular Vietnamese curriculum from textbooks in their own language, and they review some of the content material in oral Vietnamese lessons. In the second grade all textbooks are diglot, and education is bilingual. In the third grade the pupils move into a monolingual Vietnamese curriculum, except for continued classes in their own language and culture as subjects.

What are the results? Lowered repetition rates, increased enrollment of girls, and increased competence in the Vietnamese language on the part of those students moving from the pre-year to First Grade. As Gudschinsky remarks, there have even been some fortunate by-products "in community enthusiasm for the program and a more favorable attitude toward the schools on the part of the monolingual parents (p.347," a highly desirable outcome in itself.

This last finding is common across all the programs studied, no matter in what part of the world they are located. The experience cited by William Slager and Betty Madsen with regard to the Bethel Agency in Alaska is another example (1972: 38). The language in this case is an Eskimo dialect known as Yuk. While their findings are generally subjective in nature, they serve to point out some desirable features which are common to many vernacular reading programs.

1. The children are easier to teach.
2. They are learning more things faster.
3. Both teachers and students feel more freedom in the classroom.
4. The children are not afraid to talk.
5. There is less reticence and more volunteering.

6. Parents are proud to hear their children read in Yuk.

7. Competence in Yuk is also growing as a result of using it as a learning tool.

8. It is easier to explain English by using Yuk.

9. Children have more confidence in their ability to learn English.

10. Because they can concentrate on the language itself, the children seem to be learning English faster than when they were getting English all day long.

Perhaps the most encouraging statement regarding reading in the maternal language for those who have adopted this position, comes from a study carried out in the Harlanadale School District, San Antonio, Texas during the 1966-67 school year. The program is described (John and Horner, 1971: 175-76) as follows:

> Four elementary schools . . . participated in a one-year bilingual project (1966-67). One first grade class in each of the four elementary schools was instructed bilingually in Spanish and English. The other first grade classes, which functioned as control groups, were taught in English only. The children were all Mexican-Americans. Tests at the end of the school year showed that the bilingual sections did as well in reading English as the classes instructed in English only; the pupils in all four experimental bilingual sections could speak, read, and write in both Spanish and English at the end of the first grade; and three of the four bilingual classes made more progress in every measure (communicative skills, conceptual development, and social and personal adjustment) than the classes taught in English only. The children who received intensive oral-aural training in Spanish during the school year improved their English vocabulary during the summer months, while their general reading performance remained stable. Although the general reading performance of children who received intensive training in English remained stable, their vocabulary in both languages failed to improve. The project was extended for a second year. The second year's tests indicated basically the same results as the first year's tests.

The description by Barrera-Vásquez (1953; 79-80) of the Tarascan

Project carried out in Mexico in the late 1940s and early 1950s makes interesting reading, since the conditions which led to the establishment of this program contain many parallels with the situation here in Alberta.

> Mexico has attempted to provide schools for Indian villages, but there are not yet enough schools and teachers. Generally, schools have been provided first for the towns which demanded them most insistently, and these on the whole have been the places where there is considerable bilingualism. Up to the middle thirties, the idea of teaching Spanish by what was called the 'direct method' prevailed. In practice this involved the use of Spanish by the teacher without regard to the pupil's ability to understand, and without taking adequate measures to help the children acquire it. The textbooks were the same as those used in the non-Indian school, being written in Spanish and with subject matter based on the life of the non-Indian population. The results were generally poor. Monolingual children learned very little Spanish in school, and hence little arithmetic, geography, history or science. Because they learned so little and so slowly, many monolingual families stopped sending their children to school at all, arguing that they could be more helpful to their families, and at the same time learn useful arts, by working with their parents at home and in the fields. The school was generally attended by the children of Spanish-speaking families and of those families who were particularly insistent on breaking away from the Indian pattern of life. Eventually some of these pupils went on to secondary school and beyond, but . . . they tended to leave their community rather than to give their people the benefits of their education. If an Indian youth advanced in his schooling to the point of becoming a rural school teacher, as sometimes happened, it was official policy to assign him to a school outside his native region.
>
> To deal with this problem, the Mexican authorities set up a project in which Tarascan children were taught literacy in Tarascan, on the assumption that this would serve as a transfer program to Spanish. Final reports showed that, "the children achieved literacy in both languages in two years, after which they were able to enter the second grade of public school where Spanish was the sole medium of instruction (John and Horner, 1971: 175)."

A few years after this, Peruvian authorities were struggling with

a similar problem in the jungles of that country. Owing to the isolation involved, there were few schools in these areas, and what there were had a difficult time in attracting staff. The teachers for the most part spoke Spanish, and communication with their non-Spanish-speaking students was difficult. As a result achievement on the part of the students was very limited. In 1953, however, an imaginative program was created in which the teachers were recruited from among the Indians themselves. Gudschinsky (1971: 342) describes what followed:

> In 1953 a bilingual education program was established for the jungle Indians. Teachers for the program were recruited from among the Indians themselves. In summer courses at Yarinacocha they were taught to read and write their own language, to speak Spanish, and the Spanish primary curriculum to Grade 2. When they reached Grade 2 standard, they were given further training in Spanish and pedagogy that prepared them to begin teaching. Over a period of six years they taught in their own villages during the school term, and attended further training sessions during the long summer vacation. In this fashion they complete their own primary education while in service.

What about the children who attend these schools? The first two years are spent acquiring reading and writing skills in their own language and in learning spoken Spanish. The transition to written Spanish takes place in his third year, at the end of which they enter the regular Peruvian Grade One. The regular curriculum is followed in Grades One and Two, except that the texts are written in both languages. Grades Three to Six are carried out in Spanish. The results of the program are as follows (Gudschinsky, 1971: 342-43):

> By 1969, 240 Indians of 20 different language groups, who had come through the bilingual program, were employed by the Ministry of Public Education as teachers in the jungle schools. Many Indian children from monolingual communities not only finished the Spanish primary school, but have gone on to secondary school, and in a few cases to university. Others have received vocational training that has fed back into economic improvements in their home village.
>
> A point of major interest is the success of the program in teaching Spanish. The children in this program enter Grade 3

> (the first grade in which Spanish is the only medium of instruction) competitive with Spanish children at this level. It is of great significance that in most cases this competence in Spanish is gained in a non-Spanish speaking community, where the source of Spanish is the school teacher.

Peru is also the site of a program in vernacular literacy for Quechua Indians. The communities by and large are not as isolated as the jungle communities described above, and the inhabitants have more contact with speakers of Spanish. Burns (1968: 407-08) describes the communities involved in the program:

> a) they have never before had a school in the history of the community.
>
> b) they are composed of illiterate, monolingual Quechua speakers.
>
> c) they have manifested some concrete interest in the establishment of a school.
>
> d) they presented a formal request for the establishment of the school to the office of bilingual education.

Following receipt of this request, a team visits the community and explains the special nature of the bilingual program to the inhabitants. As a matter of interest, part of the visit includes teaching a brief lesson in reading to the parents, which never fails to appeal. An important part of the program then becomes the selection of the teachers. Again, it is worth comparing this process with recent trends in Alberta (Burns, 1968: 408).

> The teachers chosen for the experiment, who are often suggested by the communities themselves, are of varied backgrounds and levels of preparation. However all of them have the following traits: a) they are Quechua speakers with Spanish as a learned second language, b) they have primary education, c) they have given some indication of their capacity for teaching, and d) they are intimately associated in some practical way with a rural community and have received its approval and recommendation.

The results of the program are encouraging. In a rural community

absenteeism during harvest time is a fact of life. However, in the experimental communities such absenteeism has dropped markedly. Results in reading, writing, and arithmetic at the end of the second year show marked improvement, and the level of Spanish acquired has enabled the transition to normal classes where Spanish is the medium of instruction to be made without difficulty (ibid.). The children are achieving significantly beyond their Quechua-speaking schoolmates who did not have such a program. Its success is indicated by the government's decision in 1971 to extend the program to the remaining Quechua communities.

Probably the study most often cited in this field has been that of Nancy Modiano (1968), carried out in the Chiapas Highlands of Mexico. There are many similarities between this situation and the Peruvian ones just discussed: teachers were recruited from the local community and trained, earlier schools in the area had taught in the national rather than in the local vernacular with resultant failure, and, most important of all, children who were taught to read in the vernacular were found to transfer this ability to Spanish and were found to read with better comprehension in that language than their language-mates who had received a preparation totally in Spanish. Modiano herself points out that the way in which teachers were able to relate to their students as a result of the common language bond may have been one of the major factors in the success of this program, and with the Alberta situation in mind this is a point to consider.

Modiano's study has been attacked by Venezky (1970: 338). I am at a loss to understand his objections. He argues that the results are not valid, since the teachers were not equivalent in the control and in the experimental groups. To the extent that empathy with the student is involved, he is quite right, but when he talks about matching for training, the experimental group had very little, and on this count results should have favored the highly-qualified normal school graduates. This in fact did not happen. In fairness, Venezky observes that less

than fifty per cent of the experimental students were able to read with total comprehension in Spanish, but these results were still superior to those of the children who followed an all-Spanish approach.

An early study in this series, involving first grade classes, was carried out in the Philippines beginning in the school year 1948-49. I have left it until near the end because there is some controversy about its findings. The program had as its purpose to discover whether or not children made greater progress when taught in the vernacular than when taught in the standard language, in this case English. The specific sub-problems investigated included the following (UNESCO, 1953: 125):

1) As a medium of instruction, which of the two languages is more effective in teaching Grade I pupils to read?

2) Which of the two languages contributes more to the development of the ability to compute and solve simple arithmetic problems and exercises?

3) Which of the two languages is more effective in the field of social studies?

4) What is the extent of carry-over, if any, from Hiligaynon [the dialect used locally] to English in the case of the experimental group, and from English to Hiligaynon in the case of the control group?

The control group was instructed entirely in English, while the experimental group was instructed in Hiligaynon for the first two years, then switched to English for the remaining years. Venezky (1970: 336 footnote) points out the specific areas in which there is some doubt as to the findings of the study:

> The Philippines study, though carefully designed and executed, suffered from the over enthusiasm of its director for the native literary approach. For example, the project reported at the end of the fourth year that the control group showed a slight advantage in all subjects except social studies. However, an independent evaluation by the Director of Public Schools in the Philippines at the time showed significantly superior achievement for the control group in all subjects, including social

studies. (The fourth year was the only year, however, in which the control group was superior in reading, which may have been a temporary result of the introduction of English into the curriculum for the experimental group in the previous year).

The results in reading are still impressive, and there is another area in which there was very real achievement - community relations with the school. ". . . interest was reported to be higher, parents became more involved with the schools, and the general relationship of the school to the community was improved over what it had been." This would seem to me to make the experiment worthwhile in its own right.

Wayne Holm (1971: 15) has attempted to refute some of Venezky's comments by suggesting that, "these same tests could also be interpreted to say that the experimental groups have done at least as well as the control groups in the state language - and that they have learned more in other content or social areas in the vernacular. This, to me, is not an insignificant claim."

Finally, there is the more recent study carried out in Alaska and reported by Judith Harkins (1973).

Design

This research, of quasi-experimental design, assessed the effect of mode of language instruction upon the student's concept of self as well as student achievement in reading. Suspecting that non-English speaking parents are also affected by the mode of language accepted by the school, a third measure was made of parent-school relationships.

Four village schools in the Kuskokuim district of Alaska having the Eskimo dialect of Yuk as their vernacular, participated. Two served as subjects. Treatment was the Yuk Instructional Program, wherein Yuk was used as the primary language of instruction.

Results

Control schools were significantly more advanced in reading as measured by the SRA Achievement series.

Treatment schools evidenced significantly greater concept of self on six of the fourteen sections of the Yuk Modified Tennessee Self Concept Test.

Total rapport of treatment school parents with the school was significantly more positive as measured by a Parent Opionnaire.

At first glance, this may appear somewhat discouraging. Several points should be kept in mind, however. First of all, the population on which the study was based was quite small, under fifty. Secondly, the Yuk-instructed children had had English for only one hour a day over a period of two and one half years. Thirdly, the SRA test is based on the skills necessary to use basal readers written in English for English-speaking children. The test contains four parts - (1) verbal-pictorial, (2) language perception, (3) comprehension, and (4) Vocabulary. While the overall test results did, in fact, favor the English-taught children, there was in fact no significant difference in the verbal-pictorial and comprehension parts of the test. It is also worth noting that even among the Yuk-taught children there were some high scores on the overall test.

What conclusions can we draw from the preceding discussion? The safest ones appear to be that programs which use the child's own language as the basis for first reading instruction result in improved school-community relationships and in increased self-concept in the child. Even some small amount of retardation would seem a reasonable price to pay for such an achievement. Yet there is an impressive body of literature to suggest that in many cases children do learn to read more easily in the standard language by beginning in their own vernacular. In addition, they appear to master the standard language more readily when their own is used as a bridge. Finally, if we wish to adopt a policy of language maintenance, we really have no option but to begin in the child's own language.

Conclusion

Throughout the discussion up to this point we have looked at the

problem from a variety of points of view. Perhaps it is time to take a look at the situation from the point of view of the ultimate consumer - the child himself. This is what Elizabeth Willink has tried to do (1973: 184-85).

> If a child learns to read in the language in which he is proficient rather than deficient, it would seem more likely that he will, from the onset, understand that reading is receiving a message. Once he has thoroughly understood this he can transfer this important understanding to reading in English. He is likely to bring the expectation of a message to whatever reading he will be asked to do, in whatever language. He will understand the purpose of exercises in reading skills, and he will be able to transfer acquired skills to reading in English. [The author cites informal research with Navajo instructors at Rock Point who all still found reading in English difficult, the first three years of elementary school as confusing, and only near junior high school had they been able to read independently with some comprehension.] It is the author's experience with these people that they still conceive of reading as looking for a fact here or there, a name perhaps, a bit of information; not as being on the receiving end of the writer's communication of a line of thought, a reasoned commentary, a detailed description. What mental stimulation, what cognitive growth can be expected to take place from reading in English by people with such a limited command of English and such an unfortunately, but inevitably, acquired conception of the purpose of reading? What is to persuade them that reading is worth the trouble. that the written page may carry a message that is stimulating, reaction provoking, mind expanding?

Chapter Nine CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this study was to review the literature in the field of vernacular and second language teaching to determine whether it was better to begin the school program in the child's language or to embark immediately on a program in English as a second language. Accepting the caveat that applies to all studies in bilingual education, namely, that results from a given community may be applied only with great caution to the situation in another, I am forced to conclude that there may be greater long-term advantages in following the first approach - native language education - than by following the second. This opinion is subject, of course, to the restrictions that have been described in the course of this study having to do with the child's language dominance and with the linguistic reality of the community in which he lives.

I am persuaded to come to this opinion as much by the research which stresses the marked improvement in the child's self-concept and in the school's relationship with the community as by the research that points to improved reading skills and easier transfer to English by beginning in the vernacular. Indian education in Canada as elsewhere has been marked by much mistrust of the school on the part of the community, an attitude which has undoubtedly contributed to the dropout rate. If beginning to read in the child's own language will help to improve this situation, the slight retardation which is mentioned in one or two studies will be a small price to pay if it results in the child staying longer in school and benefiting from his experience there. To this end, if instruction in the child's language is not feasible right away, an interim solution might well include greater emphasis on the positive features of his culture in the course of the social studies program.

In making decisions about language policy the linguistic situation in the community must be assessed to determine whether a Maintenance or Transfer Model most closely fits the wishes of the people and the reality of the situation. Such an assessment on a community-by-community basis

is necessary in view of the stress in the literature that there are no all-encompassing solutions. The implications of such decisions need to be explained carefully to the community involved, since the effects of such changes may be quite far reaching. In this connection it is suggested that this report be disseminated as widely as possible.

Regardless of the community decision, every child, on his arrival in school in Grade One, should be tested to determine his linguistic dominance. For the child who is totally fluent in English there is obviously no problem. For the child who arrives speaking 'Indian English a combination of language arts and ESL approaches seem to be indicated, but on no account should the child be made to feel that his language is inferior. For the child who comes speaking only his ancestral language, it is strongly recommended that he be taught in this language, but while this is taking place, he should immediately begin work on an intensive ESL program. Ideally, where there are day care or kindergarten centers, an ESL program should form a part of the activities, along with maintenance and fostering of the child's own language.

Over and over again, the literature has stressed the importance of an effective program in English as a second language for children who are non-English speaking. There appears to be almost universal concensus on this point. Yet the same literature points up the generally inadequate preparation of most teachers in this area. Therefore it is most strongly recommended that all teachers hired in the future be required to show evidence of training in ESL, preferably in an Indian Education context. Arrangements should be made as quickly as possible for existing staff who do not have such training to obtain it. The modular system of workshops mentioned earlier would be an acceptable way of beginning this in-service program.

Finally, it is recommended that long-range, carefully-controlled evaluation programs be set up to assess the effect of different

strategies when applied to the various communities in the northern part of Alberta. It is only from such research that we shall be able to make sound decisions about program planning in the late 1970s and the early 1980s.

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Appendix I

Recommendations for

LANGUAGE POLICY IN INDIAN EDUCATION

Center for Applied Linguistics: 1973

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Appendix II

A Typology of Bilingual Education

William F. Mackey

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